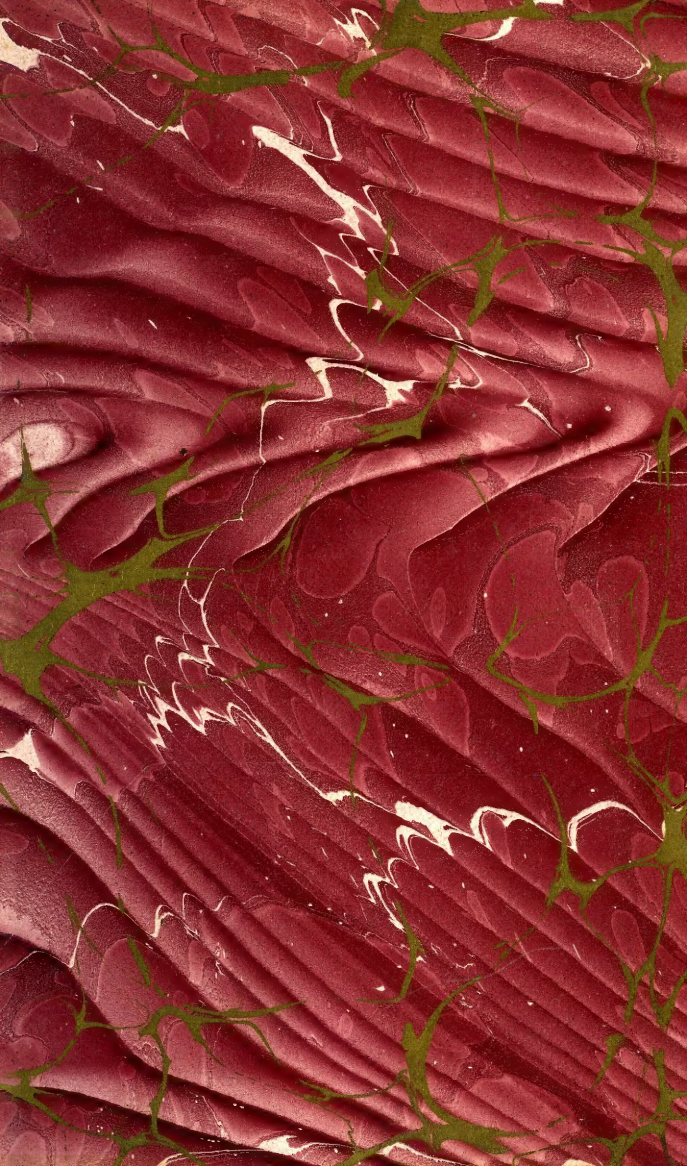
Hugh Cecil Earl of Lonsdale.



Study, B.J.

THE

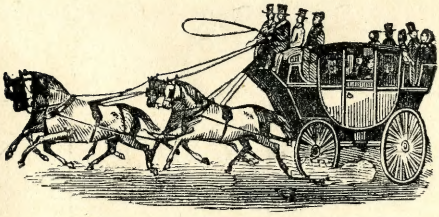
COACH-HORN.

WHAT TO BLOW,

AND

HOW TO BLOW IT.

BY AN OLD GUARD.



THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:
KOHLER & SON,
61, VICTORIA STREET, WESTMINSTER, S.W.

1890.

"For more than a century the name of 'KÖHLER' has been associated with the trade of Musical Instrument making; indeed, for four generations fathers and sons have been practical and *bona fide* manufacturers."—*Vide Sir George Grove's "Dictionary of Music and Musicians,"* Part VII., page 68.)

BY APPOINTMENT

1801.

ESTABLISHED IN 1780.

H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES was pleased to appoint Mr. KÖHLER a Juror at the International Inventions Exhibition, 1885, Military Band Instrument Section, Jury R.

FOR PRICES OF HORNS, SEE LAST PAGE.

THE COACH-HORN.

WHAT TO BLOW, AND HOW TO BLOW IT.

SOME time ago I rather thoughtlessly remarked to a subaltern in the Guards that I had a notion of writing some instructions about blowing a Coach-horn, together with a few proper sounds appropriate to the Road. The said officer mentioned this to his friends, who in turn told theirs; and since then I have been besieged with inquiries as to when the work would appear; and therefore, although immersed in far more important business, still from a desire to be as good as my word—to say nothing of promised subscriptions and anticipated profits—I have at last made up my mind to "appear in print."

A very worthy friend of mine, of no particular talent (although he can sound a Coach-horn right well, and drives his own four-in-hand), once asked me to play something on the violin, and when I had done so, he observed, "Ah, I learnt the fiddle when I was young, and should have played very nicely indeed, if I had taken the trouble."

This sagacious remark applies not only to fiddle-playing, but to every other undertaking in this world, including even the proper sounding of a Coach-horn.

Some persons can sound a Horn almost by instinct from early childhood, others experience an insurmountable difficulty; and fabulous sums have been offered to me by certain persons, whose names I suppress for obvious reasons, if I could only make them blow as well as myself. The truth is, *they won't take the trouble.*

Now I could sound a Horn at the early age of seven, and so can my son at a similar time of life (much to the annoyance of his mother, by-the-bye); but this precocity of talent may perhaps be accounted for by the fact that my father, my grandfather, and even my grandfather's uncle were *bonâ fide* makers of Coach-horns; and I am further a practical disciple of Hiram of Tyre; who, I may remark without incurring any penalties, was the first artificer in metals in the days of King Solomon (1 Kings vii. 14).

My principal object is to teach my readers—my gentle readers, I believe, is the correct term—how to sound a horn; but I have added a number of preludes in which I have been obliged to use musical notes; and I believe they will be found a useful addition to these remarks, inasmuch as they comprise easy calls, or soundings, familiar even to horses as well as to coachmen, and therefore especially appropriate to the road.

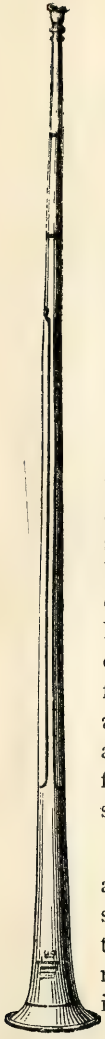
Before proceeding with my instructions, a description of a Coach-horn, and the difference between that and a Post-horn, may not be out of place; the former being nowadays used exclusively for a Four-in-hand; although it should be borne in mind that the latter

was really the recognised signal horn used by all the guards on the fast Coaches which carried the mails fifty years ago. Hence the name, "Post" horn.

A Coach-horn should always be straight and made of copper, with German silver or real silver mouth-piece and mountings, and the bell should be funnel-shaped, and not curved outwards like an ordinary trumpet-bell.

Although a strictly legitimate Coach-horn should be made in one entire piece of metal, still there has recently been introduced a "Telescope" Coach-horn, made with a joint ferrule in the middle, which allows the top half to slide inside the lower portion of the horn, without actually falling out—something after the style of the portable metal drinking-cups. From actual experience, I can safely say that the tone and ease in blowing are not in the least affected by this innovation—which, indeed, I consider an improvement—for Coach-horns when thus "telescoped" are not nearly so liable to get bent or injured, and are more easily packed and carried about.

A Coach-horn ought really not to exceed thirty-six inches in length, or else the peculiar ring or note (musicians would call it the *timbre*) of the true



Coach-horn becomes lost, and merges into that more resembling the field-bugle used in the army.

I am, however, aware that in the present age, when so much is done for the sake of show and appearance, even to the sacrifice of utility and comfort, many fairly good Coach-horns are used measuring forty-six inches, and even more; and I can further account for such long horns being adopted, not merely for show, but because more can be done upon them, as we say; that is, it is easier to blow—not the same notes—but the same number of notes upon them. There is no accounting for taste; and as some people like to hear the Coach-horn sounded as William Simmons played his little bugle in "Martin Chuzzlewit," "who, whenever the conversation flagged, played the first half of a great many tunes, and regularly broke down in the second," then I will admit that for playing "Buy a Broom" and other airs *very imperfectly*, a four-foot Coach-horn will answer the purpose; although for all the old-fashioned coaching calls, I still maintain that a shorter Horn is to be preferred.

My opinion has been confirmed by all the authorities whom I have consulted upon the subject; gentlemen, I may remark, belonging to a generation now almost gone by, who remember the days before the iron horse made its appearance and wrought such changes

amongst us; when nothing longer than the "yard of tin" was used on a Mail Coach, although the old key-bugle was reserved, by such few guards as could play it, for occasionally playing the simple and popular airs of the day.

Now the Post, or, as it is now so often called, the Tandem-horn, differs from the above, inasmuch as it is of a much smaller calibre or bore, being only twenty-eight or thirty-two inches in length, and made always of brass instead of copper. The bell, unlike that of the Coach-horn, should be trumpet-shaped, for the tone is materially affected thereby; and a well-curved bell will yield a sound far more appropriate to a pair of horses, tandem fashion, than a funnel-shaped bell.

A proper Post-horn ought also to be made with a slide, to elongate it if necessary, for tuning purposes; for it is often effectively used in the orchestra as a musical instrument; for instance, in Kœnig's unrivalled "Post-Horn" galop, also in the more modern "Down the Road" and the "New Derby" galops, &c.

It need not necessarily be straight, but may be coiled up so as to be carried in the pocket, in which shape it is handier for use in a dogcart or gig.

Having thus described the two kinds of Horns used for coaching purposes, I will now proceed with my

INSTRUCTIONS TO LEARNERS.

Grasp the Horn firmly with the right hand about six inches from the mouthpiece, holding it out straight and in a line with the mouth, so as not to cause the body to assume a stooping position. Then press the mouthpiece about the centre of the mouth, a shade more on the top lip than on the lower. Then almost close the lips, but draw them tightly across the teeth, as if in the act of spitting something unpleasant out of the mouth. Then, as it were, spit into the mouthpiece, but without discharging more saliva than can possibly be helped; thus blowing sharply into the Horn, being, at the same time, careful *not to puff out the cheeks.* Try to produce the sound "tpff" with the tip of the tongue, drawing it back again quickly, so as to be ready, as it were, for another note.

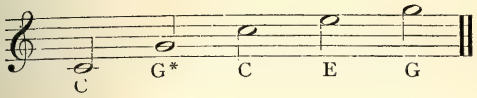
The sound at first will probably be but a short one, but after a little practice it can be prolonged by degrees. After doing this repeatedly, try then to hold or prolong the note, and not let it break or involuntarily subside into another sound.

Practise the same note repeatedly at first without trying to sound different ones; remembering that before attempting to run, it is necessary to know how to walk properly.

Beginners will find their top lip become swollen and numbed, after blowing a little time, in which case I would advise them to leave off entirely for at least half an hour, for it is of no use harassing the lip;

and it is as futile to try to blow with a numbed lip as to try to win a race with a tired horse.

Five good, clear, and natural notes can be produced on the Coach-horn, viz.,



which, for the benefit of my non-musical readers, I have marked C, G*, C, E, and top G.

Upon the Post-horn four notes are about all that can be sounded with ease and comfort; indeed, it is seldom that more than the first three notes are used.

Nine persons out of ten will produce the note G* first; then after a little practice the upper notes will come by compressing the lips a *little* more tightly, and blowing, as it were, rather more against the top part of the interior or cup of the mouthpiece. A very little will do this, in fact the extra pressure is almost imperceptible. On the contrary, to produce the bottom note C, the lowest note of all, it is necessary to relax the lips so as to cause them to slacken a *very little*, and then blow as straight and direct into the mouthpiece as possible.

These are about all the instructions it is possible to give, and I really believe that this is the first time the theory of horn-blowing has been so minutely described. I only hope that I have succeeded in making myself intelligible; and, in conclusion, I can only urge my

readers, as I said before, to take the trouble and to practise.

I quite agree with them that it is not exactly a treat to hear a novice trying to blow a Coach-horn in a house or in quiet lodgings, and therefore I would recommend learners always to carry a mouthpiece in their pockets. An ordinary cornet mouth-piece will do; and blowing on this occasionally in the manner I have described, whenever they feel inclined, or have the opportunity, will harden the lip and accustom it to the mouthpiece; whilst the noise produced will not even "wake the baby," or cause any other more serious domestic disturbance.

A gallant colonel, an eminent cornet-player whose name I am scarcely at liberty to mention, told me of a capital hint to persons learning to blow, which is to place a hair inside the mouth, and then try to spit it out cleanly. This strikes me as an excellent suggestion, for the action of blowing a Horn is very similar; and a hair is a very difficult thing to spit out of the mouth *cleanly*, as I observed. It is important to mention that when sounding a Horn on a Coach, it is always advisable for the performer to turn his head aside a little, so as to avoid blowing right into the teeth of the wind. Attention to this little point will make a great difference in the ease of blowing.

Again, when driving through London or any other large cities, the Horn should be used only when necessary to clear the road of the innumerable 'busses and cabs, both "growlers" and "hansoms," which block the way, rendering it almost impossible to "tool a team" through the crowded streets without the aid of a Coach-horn.

Most coachmen will admit that at present the sound of the horn is always promptly and civilly attended to by drivers of the above-mentioned public conveyances; but this would not be the case if the "cry of wolf" were made too common, and the Horn sounded without occasion.

On a country road the case is very different, for there the performer can give vent to his wind and lungs to his heart's content; his sounds, if musical, tending to cheer the spirits and enliven the journey: whilst if by chance discordant notes and queer noises are produced, the effect will be the same, inasmuch as the risible faculties and sympathies of his fellow-passengers are sure to be aroused.

I hope it will not be thought out of place for me here to acknowledge the kindness and hospitality of the many proprietors of crack Coaches travelling out of London in the season, who have so often offered me a seat when they have had one to spare. Such little outings have always afforded me much pleasure, tending, as they do, to grease the wheels of life, and make the journey more pleasant; and although my fare has often been good-naturedly but positively refused, I have in such cases always made it a rule not to forget the old-fashioned claims of the "professional" who is generally present, and the Guard attached to the Coach; thus leaving those worthies even more deeply impressed with my performance on the Coach-horn than perhaps they otherwise might have been.

During these trips it has been my good fortune to meet with some extraordinary fellow-passengers, and if I

were free to narrate the various scenes I have witnessed, this modest pamphlet would be increased to a good-sized volume.

One incident which happened to me as a pedestrian may, however, be told without divulging any secrets of the road.

In the autumn of 1875 I was spending my holidays at the very quiet seaside village of Felixstowe, near Ipswich, where the Carabiniers were at that time stationed. Strolling along the beach, watching the shipping and the ever-restless waves, I heard a noise not unlike the distant bellowing of a cow in the last stages of pulmonary consumption or pleuro-pneumonia. Slightly alarmed, I cast my eyes along the high road which runs parallel to the shore, where I saw an elegantly appointed Coach, with four horses and grooms in livery, pulled up by the road-side, whilst a gentleman on the box-seat was endeavouring to sound a Coach-horn, and so to assemble the passengers who had alighted for luncheon.

Having nothing whatever to do, I was seized with a sudden fit of compassion for the gentleman who was blowing—for he was getting black in the face, and it was a smoking-hot day—I took the liberty to address him, saying that, if he would allow me to make an attempt, I thought I might be able to produce more musical sounds. With a "Ah, ah, thank you, er," he politely handed me the Horn. First glancing at the maker's name and Prize Medals which are conspicuously stamped on all genuine Coach-horns, I remarked, "Ah, this is a good Horn, and no mistake, for it comes from the only man in London who knows how to make a Coach-horn;" and then pro-

ceeding to blow it in my usual inimitable style, I may say that I made "the welkin ring again."

The company immediately made their appearance, and so delighted were they that I was even offered a ride back to Ipswich, which a previous appointment obliged me to decline with thanks; whilst the lady-passengers even applauded my performance by enthusiastically clapping their hands.

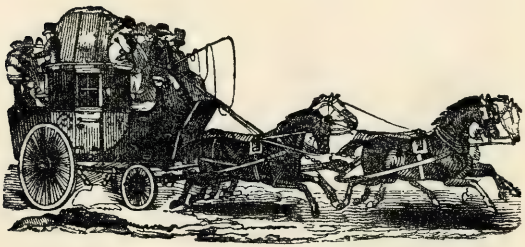
This is not all, for I had almost forgotten the occurrence, when about a month afterwards a gentleman walked into the shop of the maker of the Coach-horn, whom I at once recognised as my acquaintance of the Felixstowe Coach. "Fine weather," remarked he. "Yes," I replied, "just the sort of day for a drive over to Felixstowe." Staring at me for a moment, he exclaimed, "By jove, why you're the fellow who blew that horn so well, and praised the maker so highly. Dear me, what a capital joke." I modestly replied something to the effect that it was necessary in these days to be able to sound one's own trumpet, and that I seldom missed an opportunity of doing so.

I believe this tale was told over the mess-table, and I should like to have been present at the time.

Of course there are Coach-horns and *Coach-horns*; some easy to blow and of proper tone, others just the reverse; and the difference is to be accounted for not only in the model, but also in the workmanship, gauge of metal, and mode of their construction. With these particulars, I will not weary my readers; and it being an admitted fact that there is only one firm of musical

instrument makers in London—I may say, in the world,—who know how to make really good Coach-horns, and that being the one with which I happen to be connected, I hardly like mentioning their name and address.

For very many years their old-established workshop stood near Covent Garden; but the exigencies of the times, to say nothing about the increased rent of 50 per cent. demanded by the Ducal landlord at the termination of the lease, rendered a removal to Victoria Street, Westminster, advisable, if not compulsory (!) and to this establishment gentlemen requiring good, easy sounding Coach-horns, possessing the true Coaching tones, are confidently recommended.



THE HEAVY MAIL.
1780.

ADDENDA TO THE THIRD EDITION.

Since I wrote this little book, ten years have elapsed, ten eventful years to many of us; but the precepts and principles of sounding the Horn remain still unchanged from what they were even ten times ten years ago. I have read the book through again, and I see nothing to alter, nothing to correct, and nothing to regret, except the fact that the book, although copyright, entered at Stationers' Hall and registered at the British Museum in proper form, has been copied by another "author," some of my paragraphs literally quoted word for word, and then published by an eminent firm who certainly ought to have known better. Imitation, however, being the sincerest form of flattery, although not always the pleasantest, I have not yet made this piracy a subject for Her Majesty's High Court of Justice.

I have, however, often been reproached, perhaps not altogether unjustly for the small amount of printed matter contained in the first edition; and I have, therefore, ventured to add a few more remarks upon Coaching affairs generally, in the hope that they will prove interesting, and meet with the same kind approval from my readers.

I have also been asked to add to what I may call the music portion, by putting underneath the corresponding tones or sounds which can be played on the pianoforte; my object being that such of my readers as are not acquainted with music sufficiently to transpose, may get their sisters, or their cousins, or their aunts, or someone even dearer (in prospective) to strum them over for them on the pianoforte, thereby enabling them to

pick up the various calls correctly by ear. This will not be found such an uninteresting occupation in agreeable society on a pouring wet day, or when locked up in the house by frost and snow; and the result, I hope, will prove in very many cases satisfactory to all the parties concerned. Assuming the pianoforte to be pretty well up to concert pitch, the notes played will be found to harmonize exactly with those which can be sounded on either of the celebrated Coach-horns, the "Beaufort" or the "Heavy Mail," made by KÖHLER and SON, the firm already alluded to.

And now I will preface the following remarks by stating that I have recently returned from a trip—a most enjoyable trip—to America, and I was surprised, as well as delighted, to see the splendid array of Coaches in connection with the New York Coaching Club. The horses, too, are fine, well-bred and powerful animals; and I was particularly struck with a team of fine bays driven, I believe, by Mr. Bronson, which went up town from the Brunswick Hotel at a spanking rate.

May I be allowed to express the opinion that we owe a great deal of the revival of Four-in-hand driving to our transatlantic cousins; for in 1851 there were few, very few, what I may call "swell" Stage Coaches, to be seen, at any rate, anywhere in the neighbourhood of London or the Parks.

Years ago, poor Alf Teddar drove the Brighton Coach in conjunction with Cracknell, as servant to the Duke of Beaufort, the noble President of the Coaching Club, and Mr. Cherry Angell, I think. But the late Mr. Edward Sacheverell Chandos Pole, of Radbourn, in 1866, revived the Derby and Brighton Coaches, and did much to make the art of driving Four-in-hand

popular. Both in appearance and reality that gentleman was my beau-ideal of a thorough coachman. Cool, calm, and decided, it was a treat to see how cleverly he tooled his gallopers along the road; all the time chatting pleasantly with his companion on the box-seat, or over his shoulder to his passengers. He could blow the Horn, too, and drive at the same time; rather a dangerous feat, which requires practice; and I would not recommend my readers to try it, although I have seen him do it.

Other gentlemen also identified themselves with "the Road" out of London, amongst whom are to be mentioned General Tyrwhitt, Colonel Clitherow, Captain Cooper, Mr. Freeman, and Mr. Challoner Smith, who were all accomplished "Whips" and thorough Coachmen, studying their passengers as well as the horses they drove.

This brings me down to about the time when Mr. Tiffany, a New York gentleman, and a pupil of Charles Ward, came to England and worked the Brighton Coach with his celebrated skewbald team, and Tom Tims as Guard; scenes carried down to posterity by the three pictures so cleverly painted by Mr. Sturgis.

I remember this gentleman (Mr. Tiffany, not Mr. Sturgis) calling when our old workshops were in Covent Garden, and after sounding several Coach-horns (and hearing me blow them), he startled me by saying, "Well, now, I want a Guard for my Coach, and I guess you're just the man I want. Now tell me what would you ask for the season, say three months, till the end of September?" I said this offer would require some consideration; but as he still pressed me for an answer, I replied that I thought perhaps £600 would about

compensate me for my absence from business and its inevitable consequences. He burst out laughing, and for once in my life I had the satisfaction of hearing an American say (not that he meant it) that "he couldn't afford it!" Another American gentleman, too, Mr. Kane, took over the Virginia Water Coach, previously horsed by the then Lord Macduff, Captain Dickson, and Mr. Williams, three well-known Coachmen.

It may be a vulgar expression, but I have often heard it remarked that Americans make money like dirt, and that they spend it likewise; and certainly Mr. Kane spent his with great liberality, his stud at that time consisting of a horse a mile, besides reserves.

In connection with this subject, I ought to mention with respect Mr. Charles Hoare and his Beckenham Coach, and the one associated with Lord Bective, Colonel Fletcher Hathorne, and Mr. Chaplin, driven through the Garden of England to Tunbridge Wells. There was also the Epsom and Dorking Coach, regularly worked from the White Horse Cellars by Captain Blythe, Sir Henry de Bathe, and Mr. Hankey, another banker, through a most pleasant country.

A series of wet, very wet, summers then ensued, and although none of the well-known gentlemen I have mentioned ever worked a Coach with any idea of profit, still the paucity of passengers, combined with torrents of rain, not only diminished the receipts, but cast, what I may truly call such a damper upon Coaching enterprise that it was a wonder to me that it did not collapse altogether.

The season of 1887, however, has been a Jubilee one for coaching as well as for Her Most Gracious Majesty; and from inquiries I have made at Hatchett's, I find that

the number of passengers have been unusually heavy, all the Coaches being well loaded up.

In the foregoing statements I have endeavoured to trace the continuation of Coaching, when it languished in London and its neighbourhood, at any rate, as a fashionable amusement; although, no doubt, many private Coaches existed and were driven in various country places and provincial towns; and if I have given more credit than is fairly due to our American friends for the re-establishment of the art, it must be attributed to the remembrances connected with the trip already alluded to, and to the kindness and hospitality I experienced when travelling in their country.

This little book having reached that pinnacle of eminence known in the literary profession as a "standard work," I hope that none of the gentlemen I have mentioned will object to see their names in print, but should they do so, I herewith offer my humble apologies. Some of them, alas! are no more; others have changed their names by inheriting their titles and estates; but many of them are acquainted with the Old Guard, and know his name very well, although I still prefer my *nom de plume* in this instance to the one given to me by "my Godfathers and Godmothers in my baptism, wherein," etc.

With these remarks I conclude a third edition of my work, leaving it to my readers to decide by their appreciation of my efforts whether I shall ever be called upon to issue a fourth. In the meantime, I would ask them to remember the old toast,

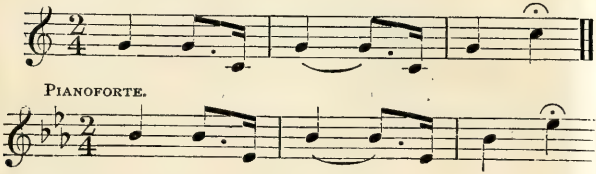
"THE QUEEN AND THE ROAD!"

COACH-HORN CALLS.

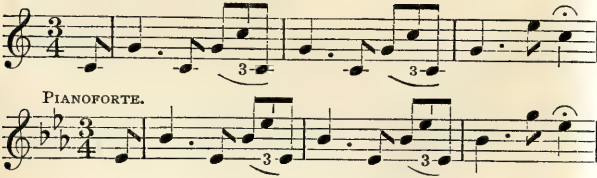
N.B.—When Köhler's "Heavy Mail" Coach-horn (46 inches) is used, the Pianoforte should play the *top line*; but when the "Beaufort" Coach-horn (36 inches) is used, the Pianoforte should play the *bottom line.*

These Calls can be repeated; and all those marked * can be sounded on Post-horns as well as Coach-horns.

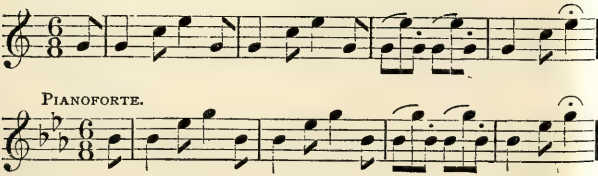
No. I.—THE START.*



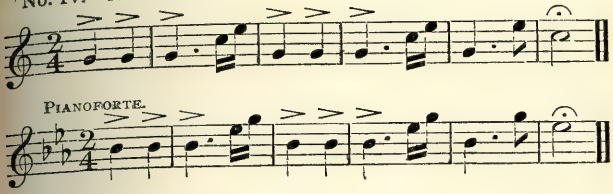
No. II.*—CLEAR THE ROAD.



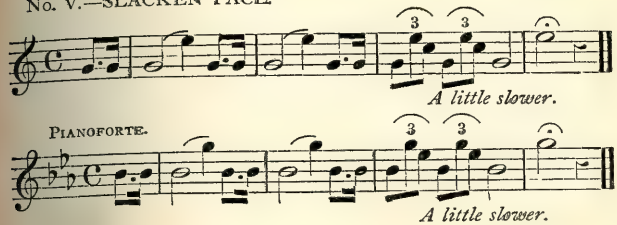
No. III.—OFF SIDE.



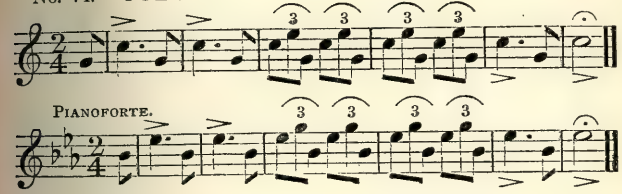
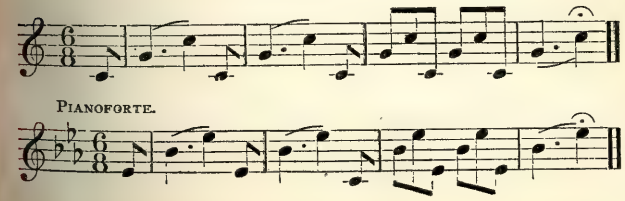
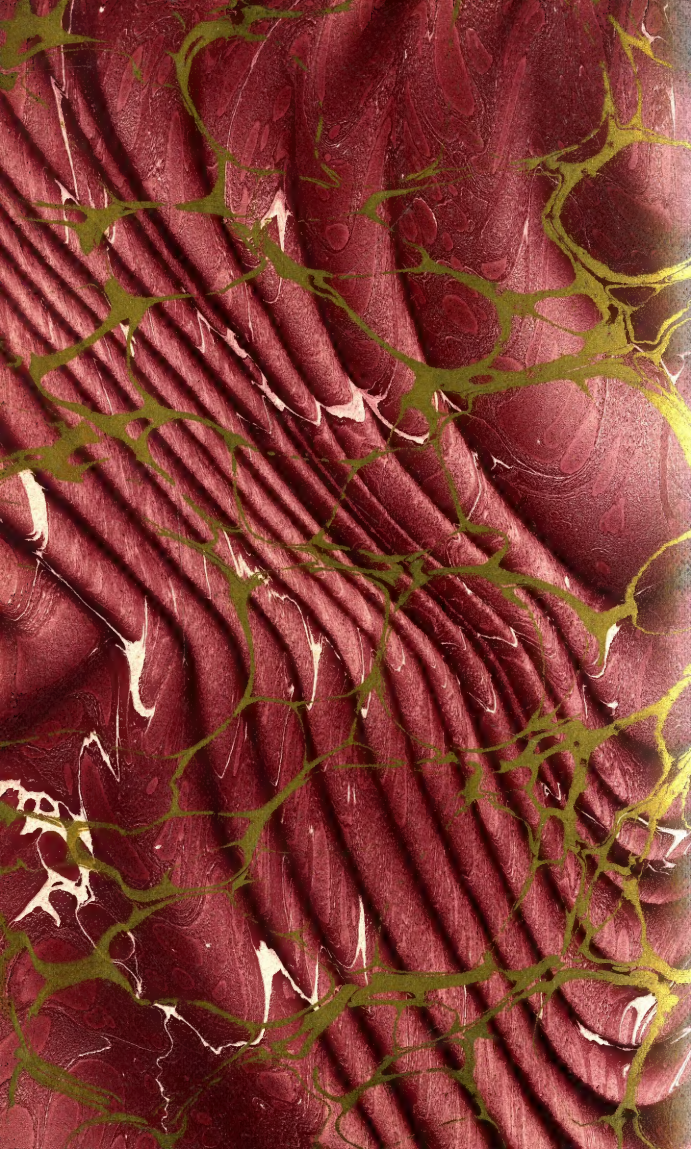
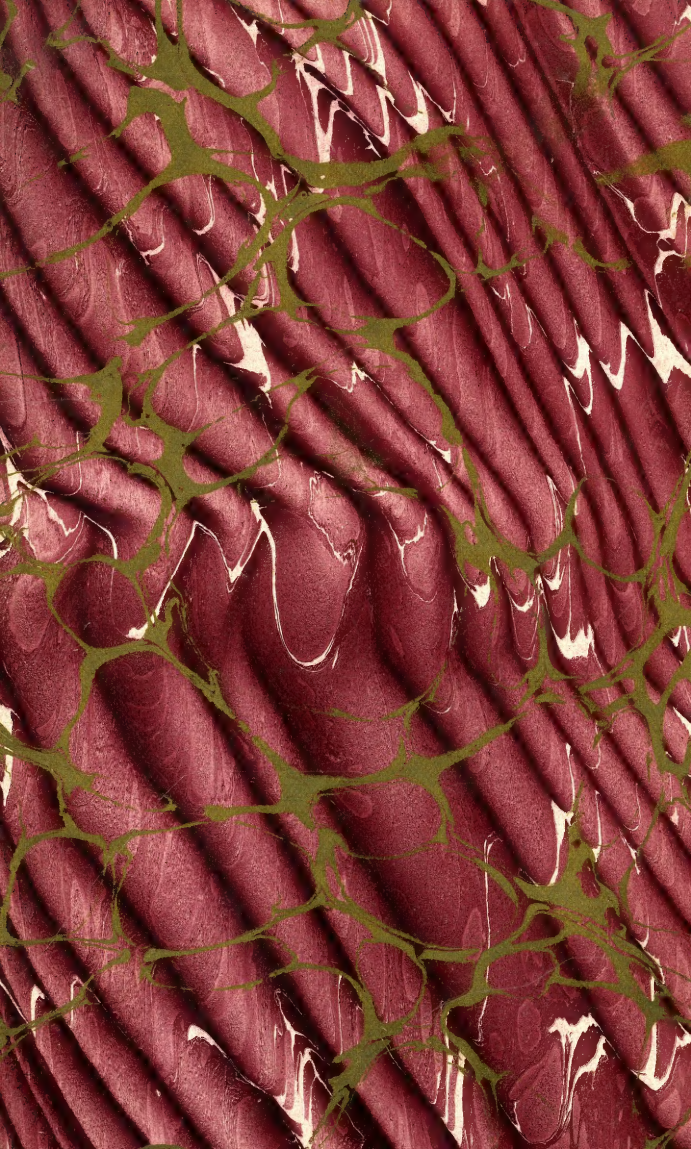
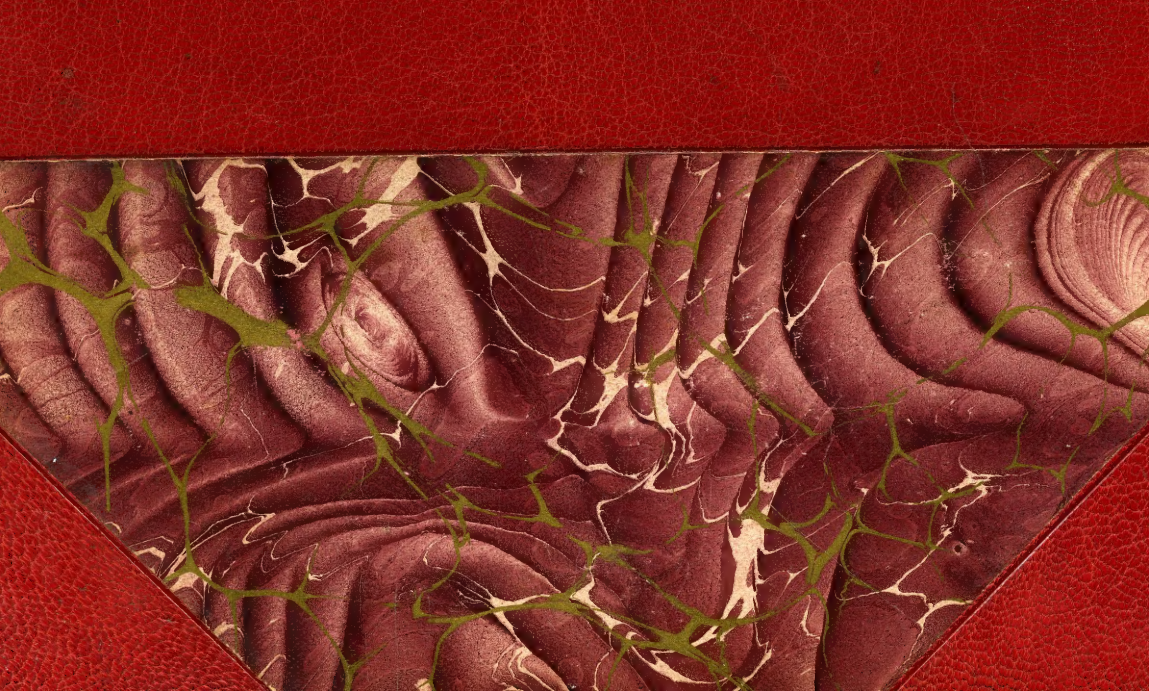
No. IV.—NEAR SIDE.



No. V.—SLACKEN PACE.



No. VI.*—PULL UP.



No. VII.*—CHANGE HORSES.